1.   (Currently Amended) A computer implemented method for gleaning file attributes independently of file format, the method comprising the steps of:

a non-application-specific file attribute manager receiving a plurality of files in a plurality of formats;

the file attribute manager scanning the plurality of received files in the plurality of formats;

the file attribute manager gleaning file attributes ~~of a plurality of types~~ from each of the plurality of scanned files <u>based on a protocol used to receive each of the plurality of scanned files, the file attribute manager gleaning different file attributes for files received through different protocols</u> ~~in the plurality of formats, wherein the plurality of gleaned attribute types differ for protocols used to receive the plurality of scanned files and each of the plurality of scanned files are received according to one of the protocols~~;

the file attribute manager storing the file attributes gleaned from each of the plurality of scanned files as a plurality of records in a database;

the file attribute manager indexing specific file attributes gleaned from specific files according to contents of the specific files, the specific file attributes being stored as ones of the plurality of records in the database;

examining one of the plurality of files;

retrieving from the plurality of records in the database a first record associated with the examined one of the plurality of files;

retrieving from the plurality of records in the database a second record associated with a malicious file;

analyzing the gleaned file attributes gleaned from the examined one of the plurality of files, the gleaned file attributes having been retrieved from the first record;

analyzing one or more attributes of the malicious file, the one or more attributes of the malicious file having been gleaned from the second record; and

determining whether a status of the examined one of the plurality of files is malicious, responsive to analyzing the gleaned file attributes and the one or more attributes of the malicious file.